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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-01

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FOR IOP/M, ILA

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION

1. TRINIDAD SUNDAY GUARDIAN OF FEBRUARY 1 CARRIED LENGTHY, PAGE 4 ARTICLE DATELINED LUANDA BY WILL ELLSWORTH JONES TITLED "ON THE TRAIL OF CASTRO'S MEN IN ANGOLA." STORY LED WITH STATEMENT "CUBAN FORCES IN ANGOLA ARE PLAYING AN INCREASING LARGE PART IN THE DIRECTION, ORGANIZATION AND EVEN, AT TIMES, IN THE FIGHTING...BUT THE MPLA CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT THEIR CUBAN ALLIES ARE STILL NO MORE THAT TECHNICIANS AND ADVISERS."

2. THE STORY CONTINUED THAT "ALL THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT THE REASON FOR NOT ALLOWING OUTSIDERS ANYWHERE NEAR THE FRONT IS TO CONCEAL THE FACT THAT THE CUBANS NOW HAVE SO MUCH COMMAND OVER THE ACTION."

3. CITING A LONG LIST OF PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS -- CUBAN INFANTRYMEN MANNING ROADBLOCKS, COMMANDING TROOPS, DRIVING ARMED TRACTORS, ETC., -- THE AUTHOR SAYS THAT "ONE CAN OCCASIONLALLY SQUEEZE A HALF-ADMISSION OF THIS FROM AN ANGOLAN COMMANDER IN THE FIELD WHO IS NOT QUITE AS WARY AS THE GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA." THUS, THE WRITER SAYS, "MBETO TRACA, THE ARMY'S (MPLA) POLITICAL COMMISSAR FOR THE SOUTHERN CENTRAL FRONT, WHEN ASKED IF CUBANS ACTUALLY FIGHT AS WELL AS TRAIN, REPLIES "EVEN IF THEY FIGHT, WHY NOT?"

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4. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH THE DESCRIPTION

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OF AN ENCOUNTER WITH AN ANGOLAN TOWN COMMANDER, PAIXAO,
WHO, SURROUNDED BY CUBAN "PROTECTORS" REFUSED PERMISSION
TO INSPECT HIS AREA.

5. "THE TIME HAD COME FOR THE COMMANDER TO MAKE HIS
DECISION, "THE AUTHOR REPORTS, "BUT IT WAS NOT ONE HE WAS
FREE TO MAKE ALONE. FIRST HE HAD TO HAVE LONG CONSULTATIONS
WITH A CUBAN WHO APPEARED, AT THE VERY LEAST TO SHARE COMMAND
OF THE TOWN.

6. "COMMANDER PAIXAO DULY SAID THAT WE COULD NOT
GO ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME BUT IN SUCH A WAY THAT ONE HAD
THE IMPRESSION THAT IT LEFT TO HIM THE ANSWER WOULD HAVE BEEN
YES.

7. "THERE ARE SUGGESTIONS THAT SOME OF THE MPLA'S
ARMY MEN, LIKE COMMANDER PAIXAO, WHO HAVE FOUGHT A
LONG GUERILLA WAR ARE BEGINNING TO RESENT THE COMMAND THAT
SUCCESS HAS GIVEN THE CUBANS. BUT UNTIL THE CUBANS HAVE
FINISHED THEIR JOB OF BRINGING THIS WAR TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION,
THEY WILL RETAIN THEIR POWER AMID INCREASINGLY UNREAL ATTEMPTS
TO CONTINUE THE MAKE-BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE NO MORE THAN
TECHNICIANS AND ADVISERS."
ASKEY

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